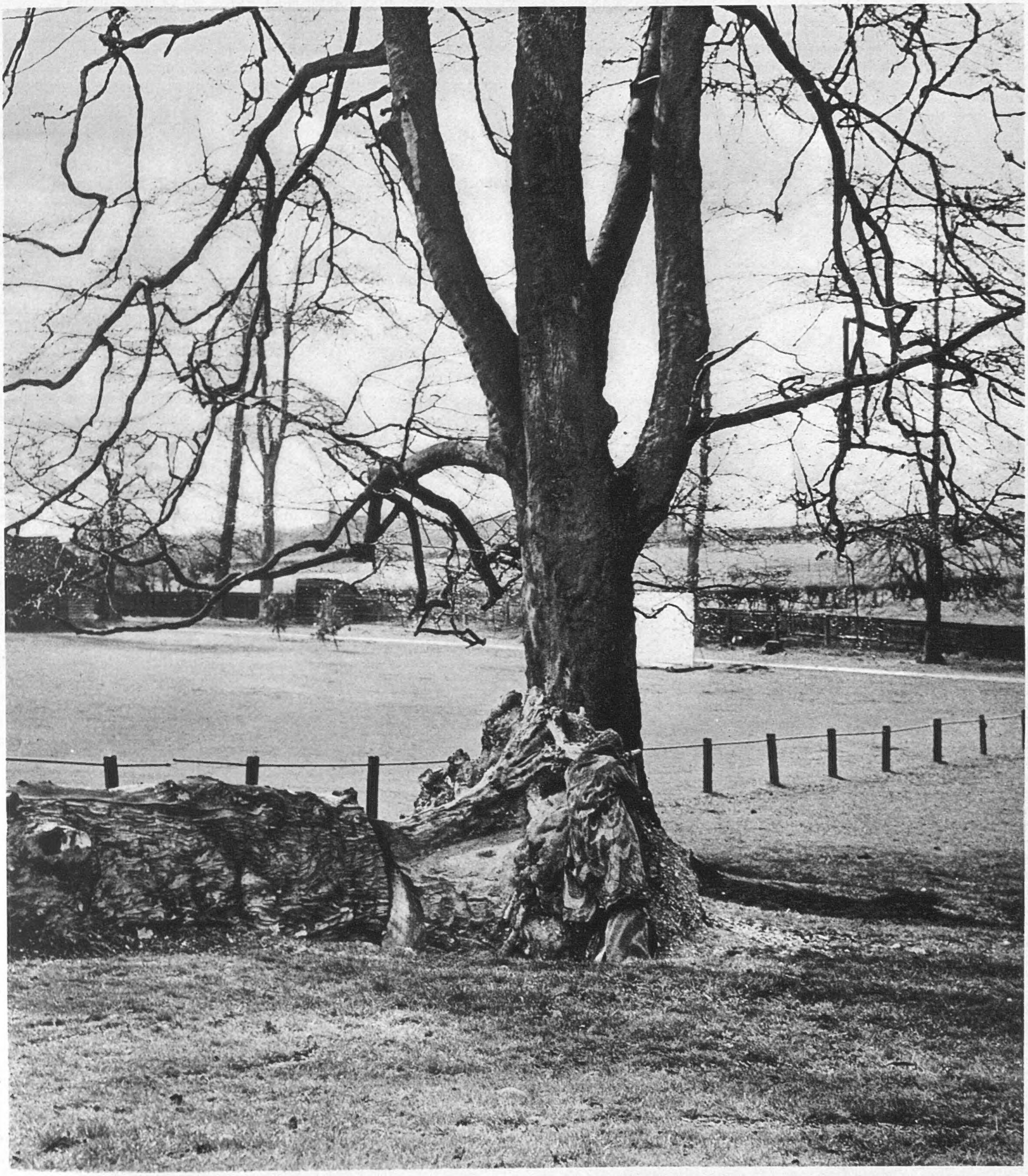
The Sketch

No. 2518—Vol. CXCIV. WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 1941. ONE SHILLING AND THREEPENCE.



PUZZLE—FIND THE SOLDIER!

Here's a peaceful English landscape, but it contains a soldier, rifle in hand, ready to snipe at any approaching enemy. The man has been rendered practically invisible by means of clever camouflage as practised at the Army Camouflage Development and Training Centre. Close scrutiny will reveal his presence, at the foot of the big tree in the foreground. Other photographs illustrating the amazing results obtained by modern camouflage appear on our "Literary Lounger" pages.

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

I Put My Foot Down. I am worried about my Sainted Aunt, to whom I have had occasion to refer more than once. She has earned her rest, and I don't like to think of her turning in her grave frequently and violently, as she is undoubtedly doing. She executed a whole somersault the other day when the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the standard rate of Income Tax would be ten shillings in the pound. If anybody had told her that in order to have a net income of five thousand she would need a gross income of over fifty thousand—well, I know what she would have said. Being a woman of spirit, she would have flatly refused to have an income of fifty thousand. I am bound to say that I agree with her. I will do much for my country, but when asked to present it with about twelve pounds in order to keep one pound, then I too take my stand and affirm that nothing will induce me to earn an income of fifty thousand a year. They can arrest me if they like, but nothing will shake my determination.

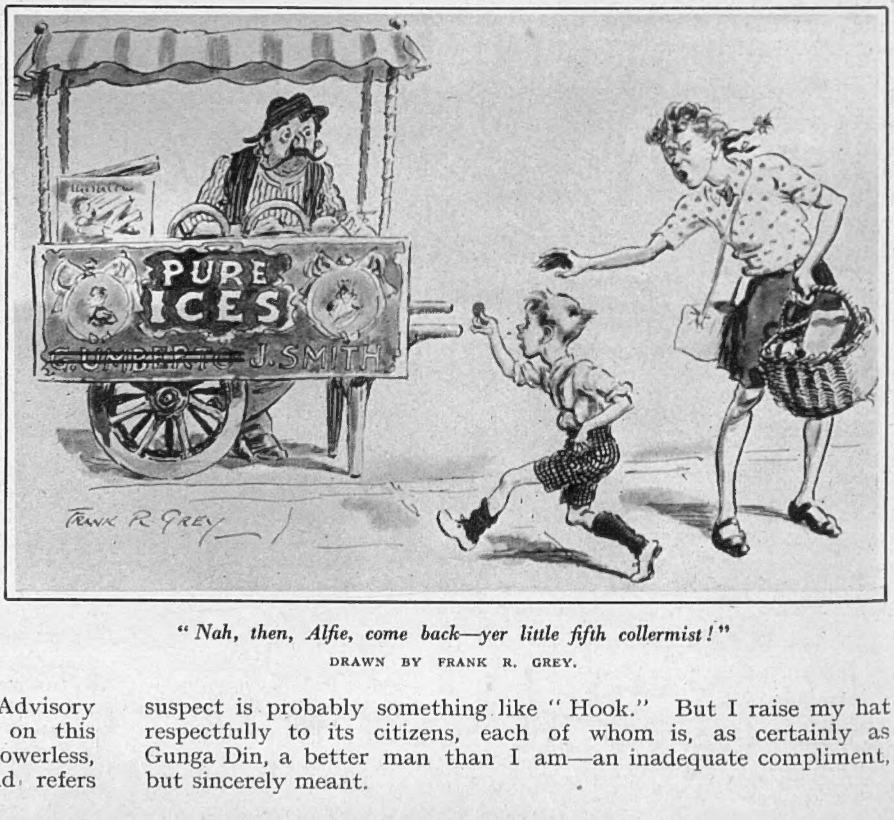
"'E says they've bust up their electric toaster!"
DRAWN BY TERNENT.

Snowball Finance. Fourteen millions a day, and still on the up and up. Five thousand millions a year at a conservative estimate. I leave it to economists to explain where it is all coming from, but, whatever technical jargon they use, I take it that the general economic principle is that in time of war figures don't really mean anything. One is surprised at nothing, and yet certain queries obstinately obtrude themselves. The last war, at its height, when countless shells were being fired off every day, when we were maintaining a huge army in the field, and when we were helping to finance most of our allies, cost about six millions a day. It is easy to understand that the expense items of this war have grown vastly in many new directions, but ought they to be more than twice as heavy as in 1918? One cannot resist a suspicion that an enormous sum of money is going to the maintenance of an ever-swelling body of officials who merely duplicate and triplicate the painful stages of departmental procedure. For example, has all the elaborate system of regionalisation done more than add another step to the corkscrew staircase?

Too Many Cooks. Here is a small but illuminating example, from my own recent experience, of the policy of Too Many Cooks. A certain institution (I refrain from details) is set up, as an emergency measure, by the local Corporation, with the blessing of the Ministry of Health. For sufficient reasons, it specially needs Air Raid protection. It happens to fall within my sphere of responsibility. I set the ball rolling with the Advisory Committee which is supposed to keep a special eye on this institution. It answers pathetically that it is quite powerless, being merely "advisory" and not "executive," and refers me to the Evacuation Officer. He replies that he is asking the Ministry for authority to purchase equipment, but meanwhile he must consult the Chief Fire Officer. Nothing happens, and I try again. This time the Advisory Committee refers me to the Emergency Committee. The Emergency Committee passes the buck to the Town Clerk, who, in the fullness of time, informs me that the Ministry has authorised the purchase of equipment, which is "on order" and may be expected "shortly" (how well I know what that means!). Five different authorities have now been at work, a fat file of correspondence has accumulated, and the wonder to me is that at some stage or other the Regional Commissioner has not added his valuable quota. Net result—things are exactly where they were two months ago; but great improvements (though only half of what has been asked for) are to be expected "shortly."

Efficiency. And so the grand old sport of Passing the Buck adds inexhaustibly to what Lord Milne, evidently speaking with deep feeling, has recently called the "curse of paper." There is supposed to be a shortage of paper—but not in official circles, where every moment sees the birth of twin and triplet Returns. A self-important super-clerk in an office, who wants to prove his zeal and justify his existence, can in ten minutes dictate a demand for an immediate, and probably unnecessary, return-in-triplicate which will cost hundreds of people hundreds of hours. I speak from the fullness of my heart, as I have just completed a complicated return of equipment down to the uttermost detail of triangular bandages, and I am perfectly certain that its ultimate destiny is to gather dust in a filing-cabinet where no human eye will ever rest on it again. Well, dust unto dust! I see that the Home Guard is beginning to writhe under this scourge, but nothing will cure the morbid craving for "records" once it has taken hold of an Efficient Administrator. It is extraordinary how often Departmental Efficiency and Mental Deficiency seem to go together.

By Heckmondwike! Now, for a simple, direct way of getting things done, instead of making returns about them, commend me to Heckmondwike, Yorks. They don't use official language in Heckmondwike. They talk like this: "We set about it. We meant it. We decided to do things thorough. We had a lunch. There were four Yorkshire towns scrapping for first place. So we set out to beat the lot." Terse, sharp, not a word wasted—it would never do in Whitehall! But it did remarkably well in Heckmondwike, and resulted in £364,743 of war savings, or £62 per head of a population of nine thousand. In short, in the still unbureaucratic language of Mr. Percy Fletcher, the organiser, "We walloped the lot." And some of the others in Yorkshire needed a lot of walloping in this Brass Band Contest, which sets us all a tune! I reproach myself that, until it leapt into the news, the name of Heckmondwike was insufficiently known to me. Even now, I could not instantly pick it out on the map, and I could only make the wildest guess at its pronunciation, which I suspect is probably something like "Hook." But I raise my hat respectfully to its citizens, each of whom is, as certainly as Gunga Din, a better man than I am—an inadequate compliment, but sincerely meant.



"Nah, then, Alfie, come back—yer little fifth collermist!"
DRAWN BY FRANK R. GREY.

No Place Like Home. Another example of direct action, with the minimum of "paper war," has recently been provided by the new race of London Troglodytes—a hardy and determined breed of men. Be it ever so humble, there 's no place like home; and if home happens to be a tunnel, instead of a thatched cottage, there is still no place like it. Such, at all events, was the opinion of the 2500 cave-dwelling Cockneys who had become so much attached to their tunnel that they rose as one man when the authorities threatened to evict them. Two hundred of them went straight to the House of Commons, with a petition signed by seven thousand people; and their will prevailed. A very extraordinary tunnel it is, with a canteen, orchestra, male voice choir, library, weekly newspaper, concerts and religious services. There is much matter here for the social philosopher, and I leave to him the appropriate reflections on self-government and on the infinite adaptability not only of the Englishman but of the human species.

A Question of Reconstruction. Peace or war, we still have to get our hair cut—or permed, as the case may be—and it might have been supposed that this, at least, was one of the industries which war would not seriously affect. The truth, as explained by a recent Hairdressers' Federation, is far otherwise. It seems that the last war gravely threatened this vital industry because it "made men self-shavers." Well, you live and learn! I had supposed that most men were self-shavers, even in 1914, but apparently there were quite a number of faint-hearted males who shrank from cold steel. Either they became hardened by the smash-and-grab, skin-'em-alive shave of trench life, or the new and cowardly fashion of the safety razor solved the problem for them, and after the war they continued this pusillanimous policy, thereby taking the bread out of the professional face-mowers' mouths. The situation was saved by the gallant and providential action of the women in coming to the rescue with shingles, Eton crops, waves, washes, shampoos, and far more refinements of the coiffeur's art than I or any man professes to understand. But the question which is now agitating hairdressing circles is, what is going to happen after this war? Men, I presume, will continue to be self-shavers, but, unless somebody invents a new mechanical Home Hairdresser (which is always possible), I suppose there is not much danger of their becoming self-hair-cutters. But suppose women were to return to flowing tresses, the bird's-nest and the bun? Incredible, you say? Nothing is incredible about a woman's Crowning Glory. The Hairdressers' Federation rightly feels that there is a strong case here for a statement of Peace Aims.

The Bevin Bonnet. Perhaps the question will be affected by the Munition Mob-Cap. No wayward locks or golden strands in munition factories! They are apt to become involved in the machinery, with disastrous consequences. The uniform headgear is therefore a net—how Victorian!—or a mob-cap, to be known (shall we say?) as the Bevin Bonnet. To judge by photographs, I should say that it adequately combines the utilitarian with the æsthetic. But I am not sure about its ultimate effect on styles of coiffure. It may perpetuate the fashion of shorn locks; but may it not also lead to a reaction in favour of down-the-back cascade? Tresses so long confined "by order" may tend to luxuriate, by sheer force of contrast, when the restraint is removed. It is a nice question of feminine psychology. I am not rash enough to offer an opinion on it, but I think that the Hairdressers' Federation would be well advised to keep a close eye on developments.

The Demon Barber. I presume that this influential body, which has such power over us all, discusses every aspect of the hairdresser's technique at its conferences. Does it, I wonder, make a special study of the Art of Conversation? I have an impression that most barbers have been brought up to believe that a bright bedside manner is an essential part of their equipment. I wish the Federation would devote its attention to producing a race of tongue-tied hairdressers. This would enormously alleviate the lot of both operator and patient, for I suggest that most patients find conversation almost as much a strain in the barber's as in the dentist's chair. In peacetime, after the vagaries of the weather had been exhausted, and it had been settled, without enthusiasm, that the hair was receding here and there, or was "splitting at the ends," there was an inevitable drift towards the prospects of the Arsenal or the Spurs—a subject from which the only refuge was simulated slumber. And now it is Hitler. The last place in which one wants to discuss Hitler (or so I find) is the barber's chair. In that helpless position, I prefer to be at peace with all men: my slumber becomes a kind of trance and my responses little better than animal noises. I commend Mr. Calvin Coolidge to the Federation as the model for all barbers, and when I find such an one, I will double his tip and consider the money well spent.

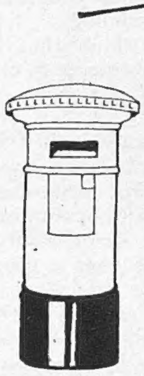
"Attack at dawn, General? But it will interfere with our training!"

DRAWN BY BEAUCHAMP.

Chain Your Cheetahs. Our traffic problems are sufficiently complicated without adding to them by wild life from the jungle. If, therefore, you are given to strange pets, do please try to keep them under control; a mettlesome young tiger, or a frisky python, let loose on our crowded roads adds seriously to the difficulties of traffic constables. The other day a party of equestrians were hacking quietly along a country lane when a cheetah sprang from a hedge and challenged one of the horses to a five-furlong gallop. An unsporting perambulator got in the way and spoiled what promised to be a most interesting event. The course was littered with ponies, pedestrians, nurses, babies and rustics, and the cheetah, when finally recaptured in a farmyard, showed much annoyance at being told that it was disqualified for bumping and boring. I dare say that a cheetah is a dear little thing to have about the house, but I feel that cheetah-fanciers should be careful about exercising their pets.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.

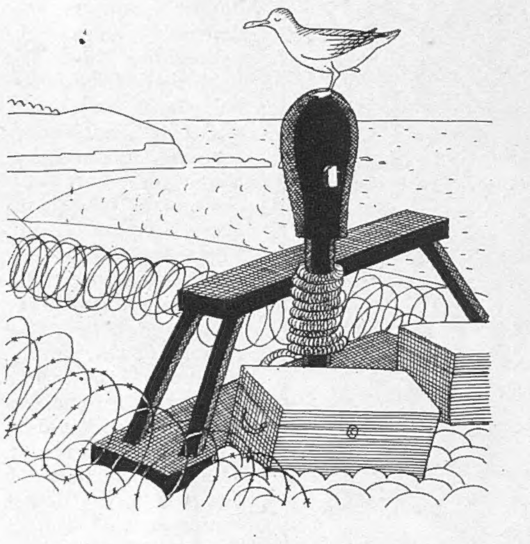


MY DEAR ROBERT—The seagulls are beginning to get ready for the Summer Visitors. No bathing-hut attendant or lodging-house keeper looks forward with as much pleasure to a good season as do the seagulls. About this time of the year they begin preening and prinking in a very self-conscious manner, standing on one leg on the chimney-pots on cold days, and standing, still on one leg, on the windlasses on warm days and gazing out to sea with noble expressions on their faces. This behaviour, which is intended as a sort of curtain-raiser, provokes many exclamations of admiration from the Spring Visitors, who are too cold to sit about and give the birds their full attention.

It is when the bathing season starts that the seagulls really come into their own, and Charles and I delight in watching their antics in front of the next-door hut.

The seagull approaches the group with cautious step and a rapacious gleam in his yellow eye. "What a lovely seagull!" says somebody.

"Here you are, old boy," says somebody else, and a piece of sandwich is thrown.



"On the windlasses on warm days."

The seagull, who is not in the least frightened, utters a loud squawk of terror and flies away to the edge of the water.

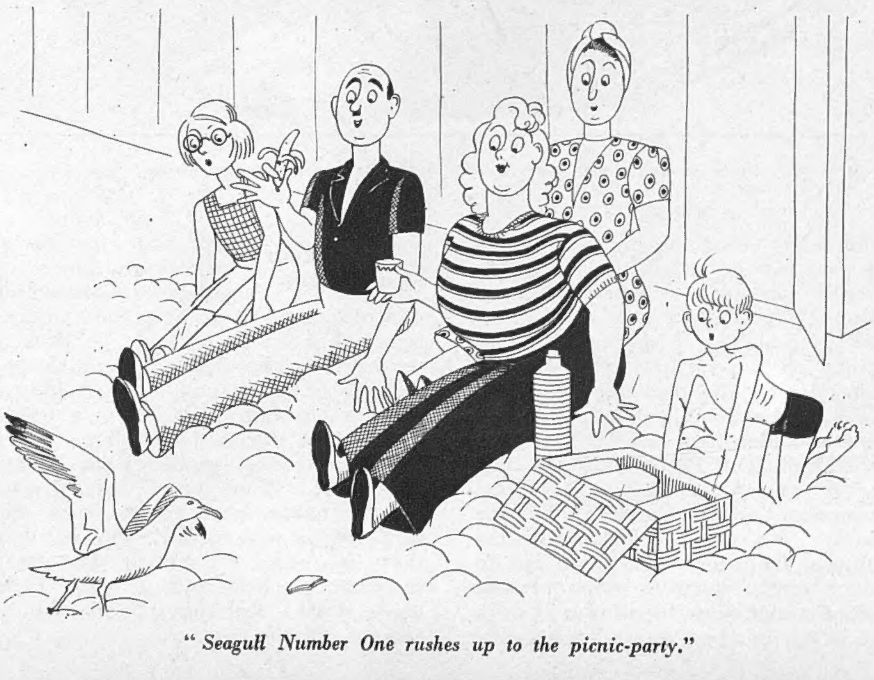
There is a reproachful chorus of "Oh, you've frightened him!" and another piece of sandwich is thrown, a little farther off this time.

The seagull approaches it cautiously, neck outstretched, and one flat, yellow foot put down exactly behind the other, while the delighted picnic-party holds its breath. When the seagull is about half a foot from the delicious morsel it appears to lose its nerve, and turns round and waddles away. The picnic-party lets its breath go in a long, disappointed sigh.

"You bogus old rascal!" says Charles, under his breath, and the seagull more or less gives him a wink.

By this time a second seagull has arrived, which is not at all to the liking of Seagull Number One, who gives him a vicious peck when he thinks nobody is looking.

But Seagull Number Two is too hungry for the finer shades of approach, and quickly gobbles up the more distant tit-bit. Seagull Number One, terrified of being out-manœuvred, rushes up to the picnic-party and bolts the first piece without any preliminary nonsense.



"Seagull Number One rushes up to the picnic-party."

"Look! He's getting quite tame!" cries the picnic-party, which is thrown into a paroxysm of joy by this behaviour, and the air is filled with whirling tongue sandwiches. These the seagulls, after a little squabbling with some friends who have come to join the fun, gobble up in less than a minute, and the picnic-party, which finds itself still hungry, goes off to the nearest café to buy itself buns.

All the seagulls fly away, except Seagull Number One, who is left sitting on the beach, swollen and replete. . . . After a time he sits up and begins sidling towards us. Charles and I watch this stealthy advance without emotion.

"If you think I'm going to give you anything, you're making a big mistake," says Charles coldly. "*I'm* not a Summer Visitor."

The seagull stops and gives Charles a malevolent look, then throws back its head, opens its beak wide and utters peal after peal of raucous and sardonic laughter. One can't help liking the creatures, and it is sad to think that this year there will be no huts, no picnic-parties, and most certainly no tongue sandwiches whirling through the air.

But the seagulls still have one star turn left to them. It is known in this family as "Pretty Picture," and consists of one female Visitor, generally young and attractive, standing on the edge of the cliff and throwing bits of bread, and the seagulls swarming in the air around her.

"Perry ate them."

"What a pretty picture!" say the passers-by.

And indeed it is a pretty picture. The lady's skirts flutter in the breeze, with luck a lock of hair escapes from its permanent wave, and an attractive figure is seen to full advantage outlined against the sparkling sea. The seagulls, whose every movement, once they get off their feet, is the poetry of motion, swoop, dive and snatch, their breasts reflecting a pleasant pink glow from the red cliffs.

"*What* a pretty picture!" Quite a little crowd collects, and in the days when cameras were allowed, snapshots were taken and entered for holiday competitions.

Yesterday I saw the first Pretty Picture-Maker of the season. It was rather a cold day and she was too muffled up actually to flutter. But she made a Pretty Picture all right, standing there in her red coat against a dirty green sea. In her hand she held a paper-bag full of bits of bread, saved, with goodness knows how much loving self-sacrifice, from the breakfast-table for at least a week. She kept tossing these dainty morsels into the air, and at the same time uttering little tentative cries of invitation. But the seagulls just wouldn't play. They get like that sometimes; I don't know why. I suppose they are afraid of making themselves cheap. Yesterday, as I watched, they sat sulkily on the beach and refused to move. The bits of bread blew back on to the cliff path and Perry ate them.

Always your affectionate
Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.

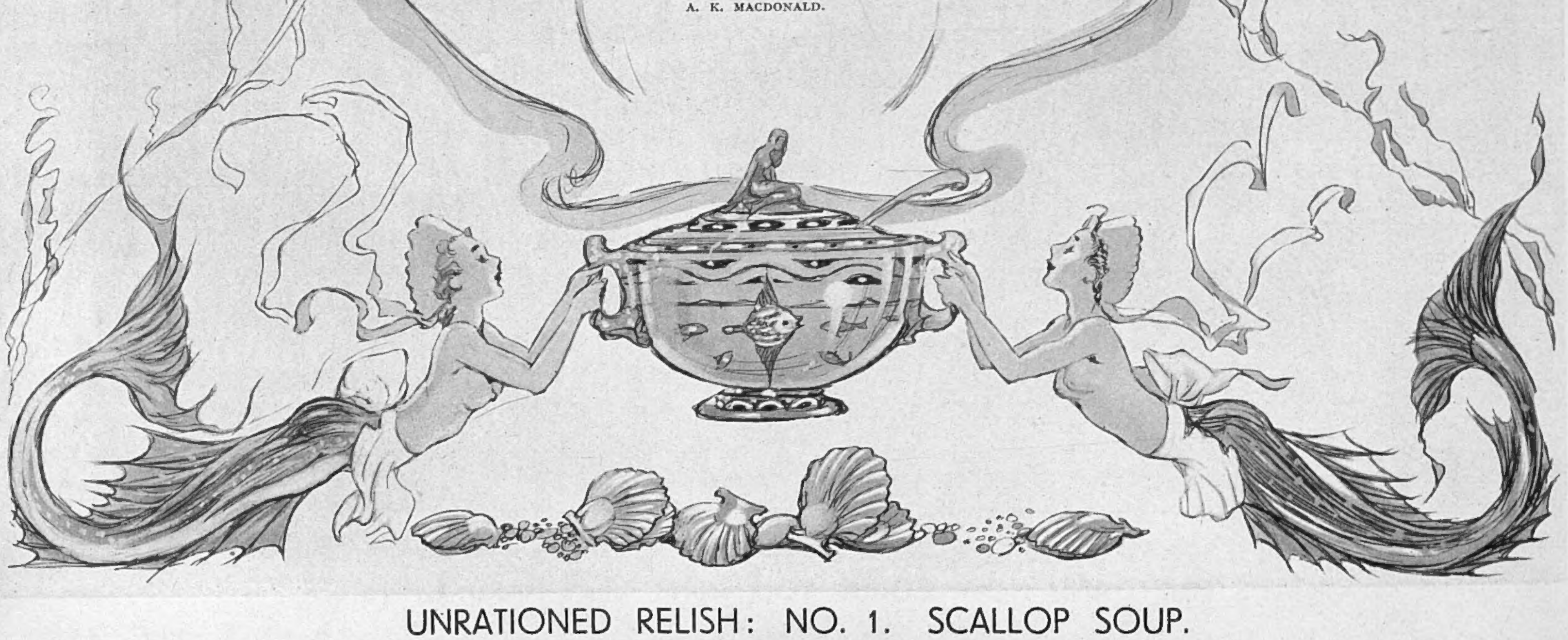
"THAT'S FINE! AND NOW COULD YOU THINK VERY HARD OF HITLER!"

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

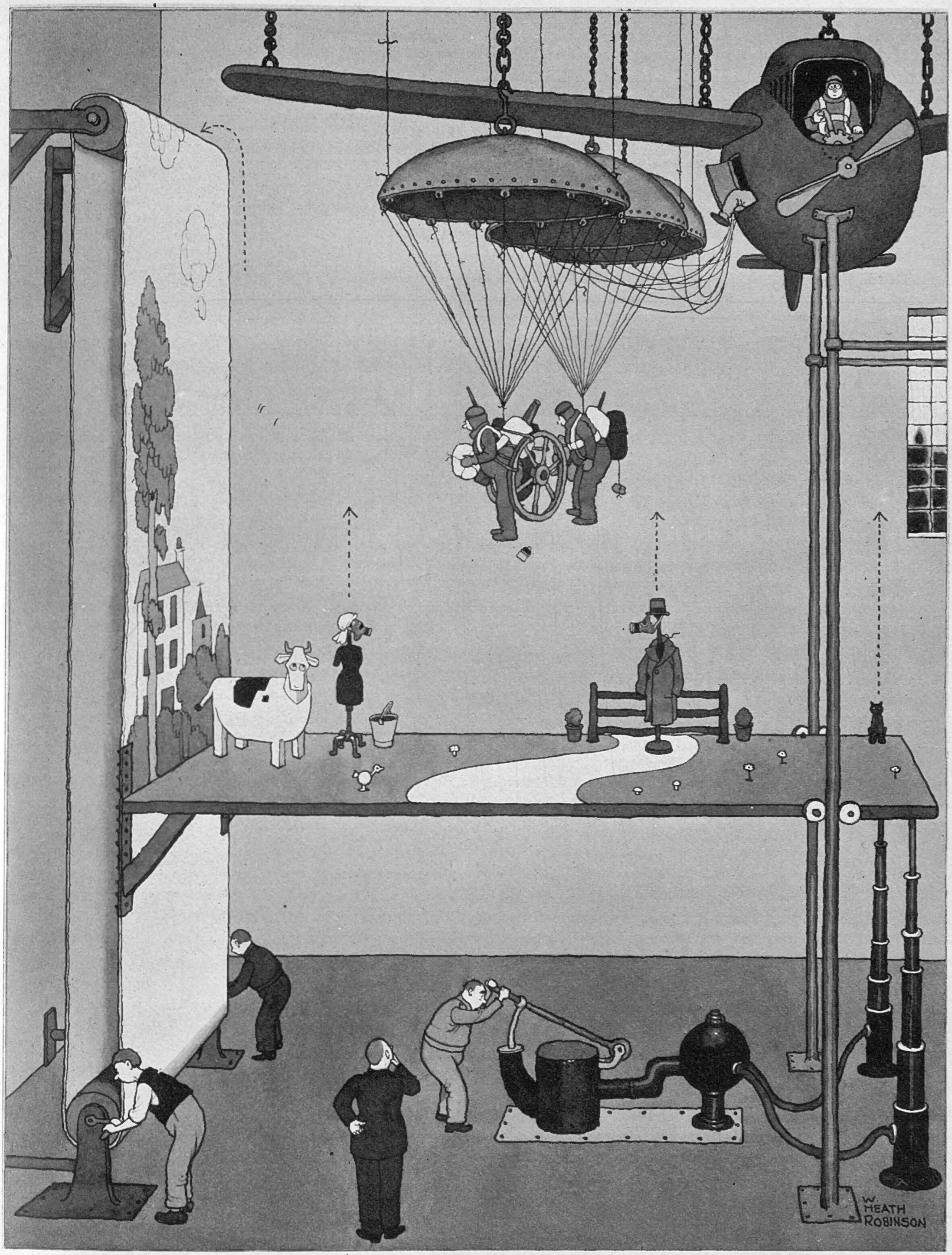
SCALLOP SOUP.

Buy a quart of scallops (if you can get the fishmonger to measure them out of their shells, so much the better!); keep back two or three and chop the rest up finely. Put them into a pint and a half of milk with a quarter of a teaspoonful of peppercorns and three teaspoonfuls of chopped onion (if possible). Cook slowly for twenty minutes, bind with two ounces of flour and one tablespoonful of margarine mixed into a paste, bring to the boil, and strain. Having sauted the rest of the scallops in a little strongly-seasoned fat and cut them in small pieces, add them to the soup as a garnish.

ILLUSTRATED BY A. K. MACDONALD.



UNRATIONED RELISH: NO. 1. SCALLOP SOUP.



SAFE TRAINING FOR PARATROOPS.

PARACHUTE TROOPS, *usually known as "Paratroops," are one of the military innovations of this war. Their training has been much discussed; so this drawing by Mr. W. Heath Robinson, showing how they can practise with complete safety, is of special interest.*

DRAWN BY W. HEATH ROBINSON.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

As most people will readily divine, Mahatma Kane Jeeves, who is credited with the screen play of the new W. C. Fields film, "THE BANK DETECTIVE," is nothing but a *nom-de-plume* for Fields himself. It is well known that the comedian likes to write his own lines and business—and "The Bank Detective" is seventy brisk minutes of Fields lines and business. Besides, no one could really be called Mahatma Kane Jeeves and live. It just isn't thinkable.

GINGER ROGERS *went all emotional when* LYNN FONTANNE *handed her the statuette for the best acting in 1940—the thirteenth Annual Award of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences—with* WALTER WANGER, *the President, looking on. James Stewart was the male "top-notcher." The banquet was held at the Biltmore Hotel in Hollywood, on February 27. A page of other photographs of the ceremony is in this issue.*

For that matter, the other wonderful names in "The Bank Detective" are scarcely thinkable either. What a gorgeous collection of burlesques Mahatma Fields has got together for his show! There is Filthy McNasty, a bank robber. There is Og Oggilby, an embezzling cashier, and J. Pinkerton Snoopington, an inquisitive bank examiner. There is a Miss Plupp and a Dr. Stall, a Mrs. Hermisillo Brunch, and a Mr. A. Pismo Clam. And then there is the unregenerate old soak played by Fields himself. Souse, he is called, Egbert Souse—but pronounced, as everyone who has seen the film will hasten to tell you, Sou-zay, in the French manner.

A more graceless old reprobate than Egbert Souse never flourished on the screen. The more graceless he becomes, the more he flourishes. Involved, quite fortuitously, in the capture of a bank robber, he is rewarded by the post of local bank guard. There, taking advantage of his opportunities, he persuades his prospective son-in-law to embezzle the bank funds. That done to his satisfaction, he proceeds to get the bank examiner so drunk that he won't notice the deficit. He misbehaves himself cheerfully throughout, without any sign of conscience or scruple. And there is no nonsense about retribution either, or hints that crime doesn't pay in the long run. Mahatma Fields knows that crime frequently does pay, and rewards his unrepentant Souse with a fat movie contract and a handsome fortune.

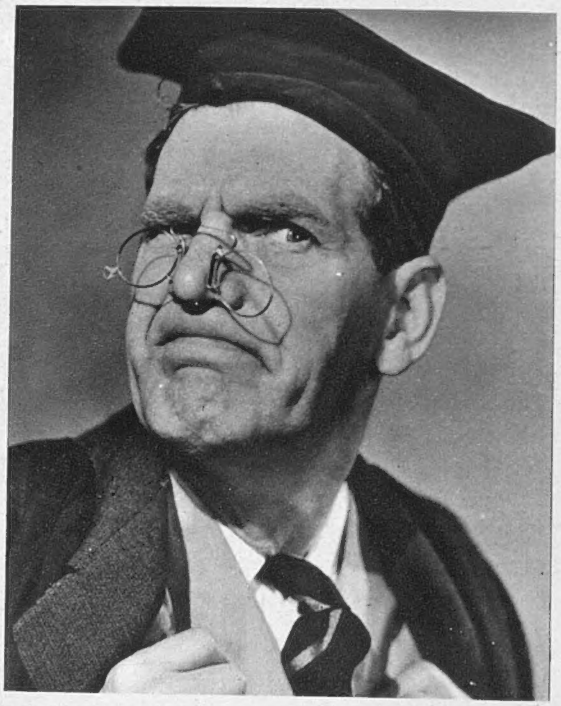
"The Bank Detective," which you can, and should, see at the London Pavilion, is as much a one-man show as anything that Chaplin ever did. It is a bit random in construction, perhaps, like most one-man shows, less of a responsible drama than a series of nonsensical situations climaxed by a delirious car-chase of the old Keystone school. My own inclination, though, is to recommend "The Bank Detective" as the perfect tonic for these bleak days. It is months since I laughed so much at a movie. But then, I must admit, I am what the Americans call "a pushover" for Fields at any time. To me, he is the complete embodiment of Dickens on the screen, wise, savage, preposterous, deliberately and flamboyantly extravagant. I love to hear that fruity voice of his coining his absurd, rich phrases. I am ready to laugh as soon as he makes his entrance, vast cigar at an angle beneath his bulbous nose, fine clothes a little jaded, topper jaunty but rather raffish. Even the dullest picture—and the great man has been in some pretty bad ones—is not to be overlooked when Fields is in it. And when he has the whole piece to himself, as he practically has in "The Bank Detective," the fun seems to me unique and irresistible.

"SO ENDS OUR NIGHT" (Gaumont) is another Hollywood film about the Trouble in Europe. If you can bear to see any more pictures on this theme—some of us can't—you will find it a poignant account of the hegira of refugees from frontier to frontier, unable to escape, because they haven't passports, unable to work, because they haven't labour permits. The story is based on Erich Maria Remarque's novel "Flotsam," that study of harassed Europe that he wrote from the contemplative haven of America. The background is Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, France. There are many famous names in the long cast, including that of Erich von Stroheim, who appears in a short scene in his old familiar rôle of Prussian bully.

Josef Steiner (Fredric March), once an officer in the German Army, and young Ludwig Kern (Glenn Ford) are political prisoners in Vienna. They make friends, despite the difference in age; they exchange views; they share philosophies and confidences. Deported across the frontier into Czechoslovakia, Steiner slips back to Vienna to await news of his sick wife (Frances Dee), whom he has left behind in Germany. Kern makes his way to Prague, where he meets, in a refugee boarding-house, Ruth Holland (Margaret Sullavan), a student of chemistry in Berlin, until her lover turned on her and denounced her as a Jewess.

The scene shifts to Vienna. Steiner buys a faked passport, and finds work for himself and his friend Kern in the amusement park, the Prater. For a time all goes well with the refugees, and Ruth, following Kern, gets a temporary job in a hospital. But the Nazis march into Austria, and our vagrants are out on the road again, heading through Switzerland to Paris. Steiner and Kern, secure, as they think, in Paris, go to work with a construction gang. Ruth finds a job in a laboratory. But the mark of the fugitive is on them even there. The political police tighten their grip. Steiner, hearing that his wife is on the point of death, goes back to Germany and gives himself up. Ruth, by a bit of emotional blackmail, finds a way out of Paris for herself and Kern. The end of the film finds them ready to set sail for America, with a new life ahead of them.

The film's main emotional responsibility devolves upon Margaret Sullavan, who has had plenty of experience by now with these simple *mädchen* ("The Mortal Storm," "Three Comrades," "The Shop Around the Corner"), and knows just what to do with them. Clipped of speech, lovely, sincere, she has always seemed to me an enchanting person, not the Jewish type, perhaps, and hardly persecuted, but always womanly and touching. From the rest of a fine cast, young Glenn Ford, a newcomer from the American theatre, makes a strong impression. "So Ends Our Night" is a bit long, sometimes rather technically self-conscious and a bit diffuse. It is essentially a story, rather than a dramatic theme. It drifts, and sometimes goes astray. But then, so does life.



In "The Ghost of St. Michael's" (Regal, Marble Arch), WILL HAY *is in charge of the science class—a subject of which his knowledge is zero, so the boys put him through it. The ancient castle is haunted by phantom bagpipes. People die, and the pipes play on. Investigations through hidden passages and torture-chambers disclose a super radio gramophone used for wartime activities.*

THEIR MAJESTIES AMID "MARVELLOUSLY BRAVE" EAST-ENDERS.

H.M. THE QUEEN *inspecting heaps of rubble which were working-class homes before a recent ferocious raid.*

T.M. THE KING *and* QUEEN *having a conversation with a man who had been helping with rescue work.*

Smiling faces greeted the Queen, who told the people how "marvellously brave" she thought them.

The Queen examining a photograph of the Princesses which a demolition worker pulled out from the débris to show her.

THE KING and QUEEN recently visited a district of the East End which suffered severely during the fierce raid of the other Saturday, and once again were struck by the wonderful spirit of the people. They walked over débris, examined the damage and the craters, shook hands with the bombed-out inhabitants and had a long talk with demolition workers and A.R.P. men and women who had worked throughout the Saturday night and Sunday.

Right: Her Majesty stooping down to talk to a very small boy during her tour of the East End.

KEW GARDENS IN WARTIME.

By THEODORA BENSON and BETTY ASKWITH.

Authors of "Foreigners; or the World in a Nutshell."

ILLUSTRATED BY TOPOLSKI.

THE morning had been so hopelessly wet that a fine afternoon was even more exhilarating than usual. We felt we must do something about the spring sun. Topolski's friend, the Polish soldier, suggested Kew, and we all agreed. It was an obvious enough idea, but he had a special reason: he wanted to get to the bottom of the strange rumour that the orchids had been fitted with gas-masks.

Kew Green, with its beautifully proportioned eighteenth-century houses, looked very lovely in the glittering spring weather. It vaguely suggested all kinds of fascinating, old-fashioned books—"Cranford," "Our Village," and "Jackanapes." It seemed a long way away from London, and the fires and noise of last night's raid. We paid our pennies at the main gate and, hot on the trail of the orchid-houses, turned sharply to the left. At first we thought we had mislaid Topolski, but, on looking back, discovered him reading a notice stating: "Bird-nesting is strictly forbidden in these gardens." Logically enough, he had interpreted it as a sharp warning to vagrant birds anxious to set up housekeeping. It continued with a request to the general public to assist in preventing what it called "this practice," and Topolski kept a steely eye on our feathered friends for the rest of the afternoon, ready to make a dash if any of the little beggars loitered suspiciously or picked up things.

Bored with Nature.

The glass-houses at Kew have very nice names: the Economic House, for instance, where tobacco and sisal and cocoa-trees grow; and the Succulent House, and the Temperate Ferns (which at first we read as "Temperance"). Much the nicest, however, was unassumingly entitled Greenhouse, and it was full of every shade of red and pink and yellow and a strong smell of honey. Mostly there were blossoming shrubs and blossoming trees. And there was a fantastic flame-and-blue offering from South Africa, called Crane Flower, because of its bird-like head on a long stem.

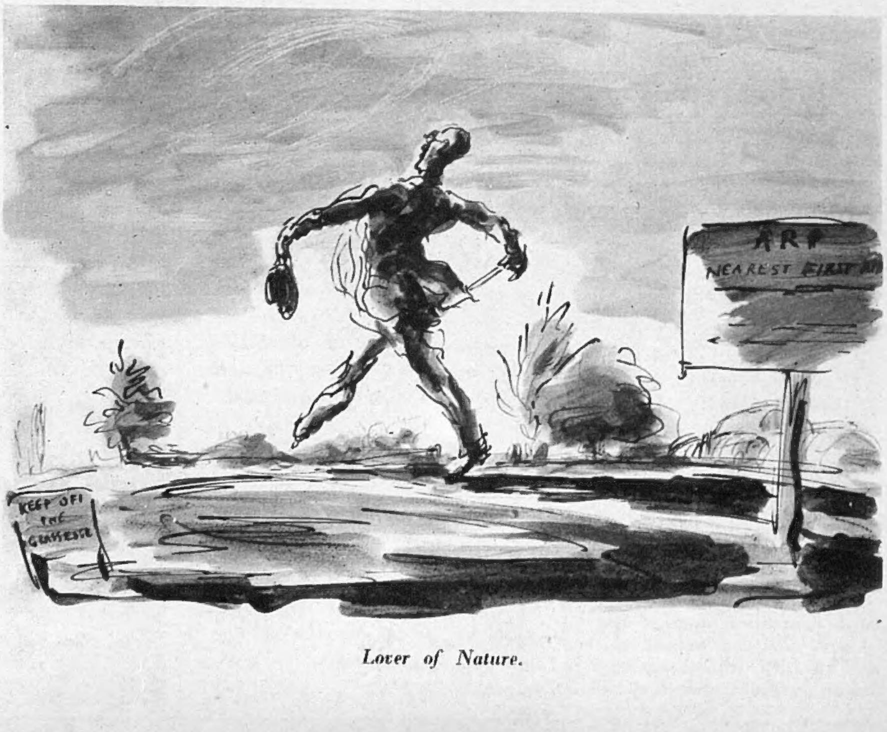
It was in Greenhouse that the Polish soldier found the charming lady gardener. Naturally, his first question was about the orchids, and we were a little relieved to find that the staff at Kew had seen the same article in the papers, and had had a good laugh about it. No, she didn't think there was any truth in the rumour, but we had better ask the orchid people. This satisfactorily disposed of, she told us some other interesting facts. There are now twenty or more lady gardeners at Kew. "They wouldn't have us before," she said, with a quiet touch of triumph. They are very busy in the mornings, pruning, tying up things, "de-bugging," etc. All this has to be got through before people arrive at a quarter to twelve; after that they calm down and do a little gentle watering. To old-fashioned purists, if any still exist, who are shocked at the idea of a lady gardener at Kew, it may be a relief to know she spoke with a slight Scotch accent.

The orchid-house, when at last we got to it, was more fascinating than we had supposed. Hitherto we had regarded orchids as pleasantly symbolic of wealth, luxury and some undefined kind of gay life, but as rather sinister and unpleasing just as flowers. Here, however, we saw dimly how the breeding of these curious, various blooms might develop into a passion. There were not only the straightforwardly beautiful types—*Catt. skioneri*, a superb purple bloom, and *Phaius orphanus*, tall and perfectly shaped—but there were lovely, rather eerie, tiny little specimens. *Dendrobium crepidatum*, with a jointed green stem and pale-purple petals surrounding a central yellow lip; *Dendrobium aphyllium*, with its silvery, woody stem and delicate mauve-and-white flowers; and a tiny, tiny yellow orchid, *Dendrobium Jenkinsii*. There were a few faintly sinister types, it is true. *Vanda suavis* resembled a Michael Arlen heroine of the 'twenties—thin, white and streamlined, alluring but decadent—while *Phragmopedilum*, with long, droopy whiskers, looked like an old colonel with a tight frock-coat and a rather lecherous eye. We were just indulging in these rather Beverley Nichols-like reflections when we saw the custodian of the houses and, rushing up to him, we finally got to the bottom of the gas-mask trouble. Yes, he said, the article had been published, but what the reporter had actually seen was a few rare specimens pickled in alcohol to preserve them, which the fertile journalistic brain had twisted into gas protection. He was very courteous and kind about explaining it all, but obviously in great haste to get us out of the greenhouse. "Everybody out! Everybody out!" he was calling as we left him. The urgency somehow gave us a picture of the orchids getting ready for feeding-time and working themselves up to incredible orgies.

In the orchid-house.

We were glad to be finished with the houses and wander aimlessly about on the young, brilliant grass among the cherry-blossom and the daffodils. The Polish soldier struck a sinister note as we stood marvelling at the deep-carved pattern of the bark of the great sweet-chestnut trees. At the touch of his imagination all the trees took on a demoniac quality. The posture of their limbs was full of menace, their protuberances were frightening; they were like Arthur Rackham illustrations of a haunted forest. We had to leave the men, to admire the exquisite beauty of magnolias all by ourselves for a few minutes to feel again In Tune With Nature.

Wonderfully in tune with the magnolias were the lovers, the endless quiet couples always to be found at Kew. Our favourite pair sat on a bench, never moving or speaking or holding hands the whole length of our visit, gazing into the distance with a moony look on their pale, spectacled faces. We thought them very English and very touching. They were happy and their thoughts were as one; we knew them to be thinking of the first kiss, which had not yet taken place. We reckoned that, at the rate they were going, they would make it in about three months.



Lover of Nature.

Only the roar of the aircraft overhead disturbs the riverside landscape.

Allotments take the place of the noble lawn which once spread in front of Kew Palace.

AN ARTIST VIEWS KEW GARDENS IN WARTIME.

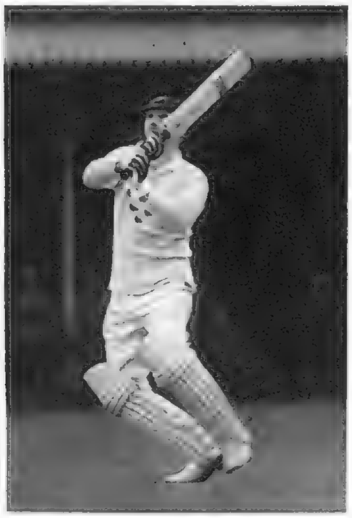
FELIKS TOPOLSKI, the Polish artist, paid a visit to Kew Gardens last week to record his impressions of the wartime aspect of the famous Royal Botanic Gardens, which on April 1 celebrated the centenary of their presentation to the nation by Queen Victoria. On our facing page, the Hon. Theodora Benson and the Hon. Betty Askwith contribute an article describing Kew under present conditions; and on this one we give Topolski's drawings.

DRAWINGS BY TOPOLSKI.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

CRICKETER A. J. HOLMES—*for graduating from skipper of a county team to head of the R.A.F. Central Flying School. Here the Sussex captain—now Chief Flying Instructor—has a talk with a newly-qualified instructor who has passed out.*

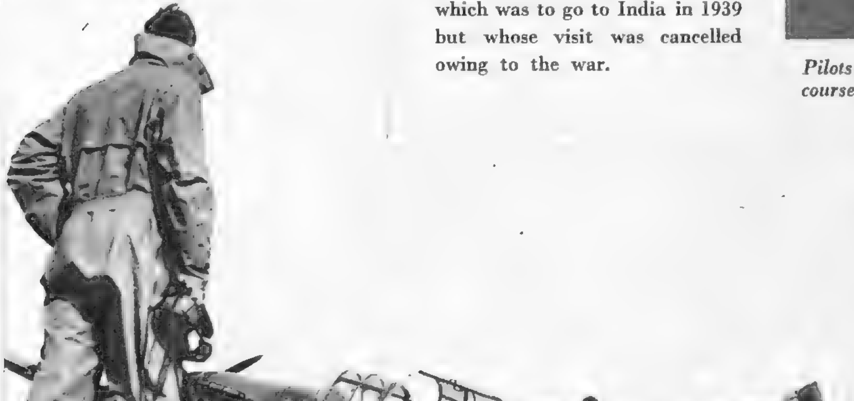
Leaning on a shed made from packing-cases bringing trainer aircraft from the U.S.A. are SIX PUPILS. *Bearded Manmohan Singh, known in Indian flying circles, is learning to fly warplanes.*



MR. A. J. HOLMES *in his peacetime occupation of Sussex batsman.*

SOMEWHERE in Great Britain the Royal Air Force has its own university, the Central Flying School, where flying instructors get the training which enables them to teach others. The "dons"—called Staff Instructors—are hand-picked experts who are not only super-pilots, but who know the why and the wherefore of everything connected with flying. The "Head," or Chief Flying Instructor at the Central Flying School is the famous cricketer A. J. HOLMES, who captained Sussex for four years running, and was manager of the M.C.C. team in South Africa, 1938-39. He is a fine batsman and a more than useful run-getter, and has proved his worth as a Test Team Selector. Then a Flight Lieutenant, he was captain-designate of the M.C.C. team which was to go to India in 1939 but whose visit was cancelled owing to the war.

Pilots are introduced to a 'plane. This is the first stage in a pupil-instructor's course at the Central Flying School. A staff instructor in the cabin gives them a lesson.



A PUPIL INSTRUCTOR *"shoots-up" a group of instructors, who eye his cheek with amusement and criticism. Most of the School pupils are air veterans.*

Graduate of the R.A.F. 'varsity, an instructor takes his pupil up for a first night flight.

LORD ANDREW CAVENDISH, *Coldstream Guards*, *and his bride, the* HON. DEBORAH MITFORD.

LORD ANDREW CAVENDISH MARRIES THE HON. DEBORAH MITFORD.

THE marriage of Lord Andrew Cavendish, younger son of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, to the Hon. Deborah Mitford, youngest daughter of Lord and Lady Redesdale, took place at St. Bartholomew-the-Great, Smithfield. The bride, who was born in 1920, stopped the car when starting on her honeymoon, and registered at a small Labour Exchange for National Service.

ENSIGN MRS. G. BOWLES, M.T.C., *and* LORD REDESDALE, *father of Lady Andrew Cavendish.*

Left : LORD *and* LADY ANDREW CAVENDISH *(centre) look up at friends on the balcony before going away.*

CAPTAIN JAMES BOWES-LYON MARRIES MISS MARY DE TRAFFORD.

THE marriage of Captain James Bowes-Lyon, Grenadier Guards, son of Captain and Mrs. Geoffrey Bowes-Lyon, and a cousin of the Queen, to Miss Mary de Trafford, second daughter of Captain Sir Humphrey de Trafford and the Hon. Lady de Trafford, took place at the Brompton Oratory, and was followed by a reception at Claridge's.

Miss Mary de Trafford's bridesmaids : (l. to r.) the MISSES CATHERINE *and* VIOLET DE TRAFFORD, *and* LADY ROSEMARY SPENCER-CHURCHILL.

Right : The HON. LADY DE TRAFFORD *(extreme left)*, MR. PARKER BOWLES *and* MRS. PARKER BOWLES *watch the bride and bridegroom leave.*

CAPTAIN JAMES BOWES-LYON, *Grenadier Guards*, *and his bride,* MISS MARY DE TRAFFORD.

These A.T.S. girls are making up for the third edition of the R.A. Depôt Concert Party production, "Gunflashes," at Woolwich.

FLORENCE DESMOND *appeared thoroughly to enjoy the fare when she opened a Potato Bar in Leicester Square.*

Right: THIS OFFICER OF THE KING'S AFRICAN RIFLES *on the Kenya front is feeding a five-day-old Sykes monkey from a fountain-pen filler.*

The MAYOR OF SOUTHEND *presented the National Defence League medal to* PEGGY, *the dog which saved* GWEN WARREN *by pawing plaster from her face.* MRS. WARREN *is behind.*

ADMIRAL SWIRSKI *is the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Naval Forces in England.*

The DUKE *and* DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER, *who flew to visit bombed Ulster, are here seen with the* PREMIER OF NORTHERN IRELAND *and the* LORD MAYOR OF BELFAST.

NAVAL, MILITARY, DIPLOMATIC AND SOCIAL

LIEUTENANT MAURICE TATE, the *cricketer, gave away his twin daughter,* BETTY KATHLEEN TATE, *when she married Lieutenant M. Rootes.*

This group was taken at Clyne Castle, after the marriage of CAPTAIN F. D. FRAZER-JENKINS *to* MISS ANN BLANCHE WALKER-HENEAGE-VIVIAN.

Right: MISS SYLVIA MORWENNA MORRISON BELL, *younger daughter of Lieut.-Colonel Morrison Bell, is engaged to Captain S. T. Chamberlayne, Royal Fusiliers.*

MR. JOHN WINANT *and* MRS. WINANT *(with bouquet) leaving the W.V.S. Receiving Nursery after presenting a gift of £70,250 from the American Red Cross.*

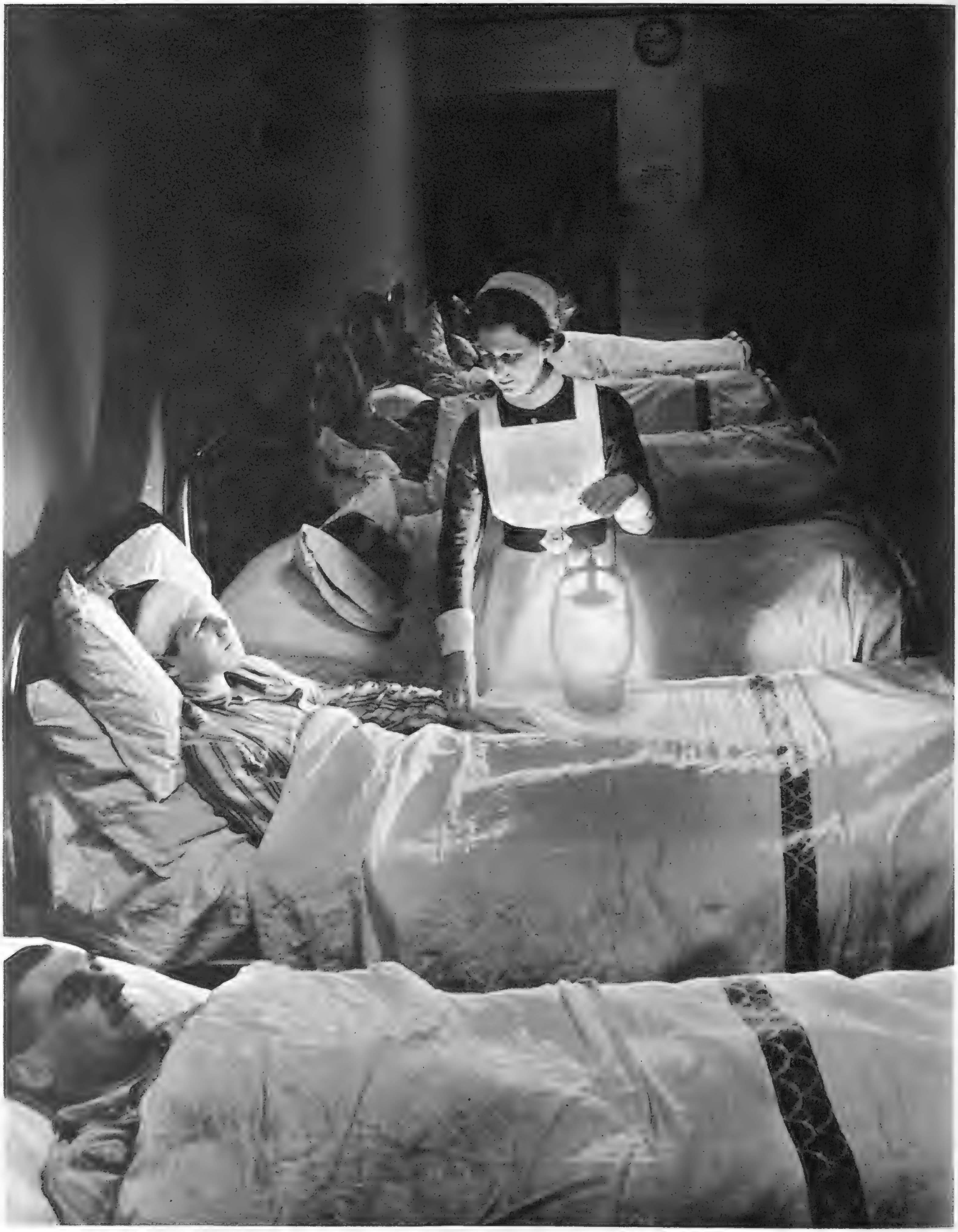
The EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA *has returned to his own country and set up camp, guarded by his own Patriots.*

PEOPLE AND THEIR WARTIME LIFE AND WORK.

THE MAN WE ALL TRUST.

Whether the news be good or bad, the whole country trusts in its leader, MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL, *the Prime Minister, and finds inspiration and strength in his splendid and statesmanlike qualities. Here is his latest portrait, taken at No. 10, Downing Street.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY WALTER STONEMAN.



LADY OF THE LAMP—1941.

The unflagging courage and devotion to duty displayed by nurses is one of the most inspiring features of the defence of London. Sisters and nurses on duty in hospitals have had not only to tend the sick and wounded, but on countless occasions have had to evacuate patients from badly bombed buildings, and have risked their lives by searching through shattered wards so as to make sure that no one was left behind. Our photograph, which recalls the pictures of Florence Nightingale, was taken in one of the wards of a London hospital.

SKIPPER OF A MINE-SWEEPER.

This study of skill and concentration dramatically illustrates the ceaseless watch and ward which the Royal Navy keeps upon the seas. The skipper of a mine-sweeper is seen on the bridge of his ship, checking his position. As everyone knows, he is engaged on exceptionally dangerous work, and the whole nation depends for its life on the ability of him and others like him to keep the seas free from mines so that our ships may be able to go back and forth on their all-important voyages.

GOOD BARGAINS IN A GOOD CAUSE: RED CROSS MARKET.

The RED CROSS SHOP *in Bond Street is stocked with gifts sent for sale, and looks like a miniature Caledonian Market.*

MRS. CHARLES WOOD *has just completed the sale of a piece of Honiton lace and is receiving payment from the customer.*

A paradise for the bargain-hunter! Books, glass, china and other objets d'art *set out on tables.*

"Shall I go in?" A customer attracted by the display in the shop window.

An expert in search of treasures: MR. MAGGS, *the famous bookseller, looking over stock with* NINA, COUNTESS GRANVILLE.

WHAT could be more delightful than to spend wisely in a good cause? You can do this at the RED CROSS SHOP at 17, Old Bond Street, and do it in the most amusing way, for the stock consists of gifts sent from every part of the country, and includes antiques and *objets d'art* of every description, which are set out on tables and stalls so as to give the effect of a miniature Caledonian Market. The venture is enormously successful, as £4500 has been made for the Red Cross in a few weeks.

"Will they come in and buy?" Prospective customers admiring something in the window, as they appear viewed from inside the shop.

MISS PALMER *has just sold this candelabra and is handing it to* MR. CUTTS *for packing.*

HOLLYWOOD'S "BEST ACTOR" BANQUET.

ALFRED LUNT *and* LYNN FONTANNE *presented* GINGER ROGERS *and* JAMES STEWART *with their "Oscars."*

ALFRED LUNT *and* LYNN FONTANNE *handing the Award of Merit plaques to* JANE DARWELL *and* WALTER BRENNAN.

BUDDY ROGERS *and* MRS. BUDDY ROGERS, *always remembered as the "World's Sweetheart,"* MARY PICKFORD.

JOAN FONTAINE *arriving at the banquet, accompanied by* BRIAN AHERNE.

TYRONE POWER *and* MRS. POWER, *the charming screen star* ANNABELLA.

EDWARD ARNOLD *applauding one of the speeches which followed the banquet.*

JOAN BENNETT *and* FRANK CAPRA *during the banquet, which took place in the Biltmore Hotel.*

THE ANNUAL AWARD BANQUET OF THE ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES was held at the Biltmore Hotel, Hollywood, and attended by the bearers of practically every great picture name. Lynn Fontanne and her husband, Alfred Lunt, one of the most distinguished acting pairs on the modern stage, presented the awards, known as "Oscars." Ginger won hers for her performance in "Kitty Foyle," and James Stewart for his in "The Philadelphia Story." The Awards of Merit for the best supporting acting of 1940 were also presented by the Lunts.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

To write about Horace is not the responsibility it might seem. Poet Laureate in his own day, he has occupied a prominent niche in the temple of fame ever since; and no one, I think, has tried to shake this most established of poetical reputations. His monument, as he observed himself, is more lasting than bronze: it will not be honoured if I lay a laurel on it, or disturbed should I try to take one off.

I once had the pleasure of lunching in a villa built over his at Tivoli, and afterwards was taken down to see his drawing-room, where "doubtless" (as biographers say when they are in doubt) he entertained Mæcenas. According to my informant the pattern on the walls, still faintly visible, was the latest thing in interior decoration when it was put on, and the room, though ruined, still looked sumptuous. Perhaps it was built, or hewn out of the rock, after Horace had written the Ode beginning:

> No ivory or gilded ceiling
> Gleams in my unpretentious dwelling

—I quote from Sir Edward Marsh's new translation, which has, among many outstanding merits, that of giving the Odes an up-to-date as well as an antique flavour. He brings in words like "binge" and phrases like "Stir your stumps" so tactfully that they do not sound a false note. Horace himself would surely have enjoyed these wonderfully deft renderings of his poems into English—might, too, have enjoyed the rap over the knuckles which his translator, in a footnote, administers from time to time. But perhaps not, for he was evidently a self-satisfied man, as witness the two Odes in which he prophesies the fame that will attend his name after death—the first, as Sir Edward Marsh, commenting on the difficulty of translating it, tartly observes, "a far less impressive intimation of his immortality" than the second. Horace had every reason to feel pleased with himself. Like Virgil, his friend and contemporary, he was the son of a manumitted slave, and despite this handicap, had won fame in the wars before he made a greater name for himself in the arts. But, like most great artists, he knew his limitations, and often reminded his Muse not to fly too high. Pindar, he says, explores the sky like a swan; while

> I,
> Like the small Matine bee, in thrift
> And care laborious gathering from the hive
> From many a grove on Tibur's watered hill
> Her sweets of thyme and sage, with patient skill
> My miniature songs contrive.

Above the Battle. But this is excess of modesty. Many of the Odes are frivolous and trivial in subject and lighthearted in treatment—*e.g.*, the twelfth in the Third Book:

> It would seem a girl is doomed to be a saint:
> They tell us what we may and what we mayn't:
> We mustn't have affairs,
> We mustn't drown our cares,
> Or we're lectured by an uncle till we faint.

How happily the translator hits off the mood of this! Horace was forty-six when he wrote the first three books of the Odes; fifty when he wrote the fourth; from the comparative security of middle-age retirement he remembered emotion in tranquillity. He sympathises with the transports of youth, but seldom identifies himself with them, and he is very severe on those

> How long, old Madam, will you carry on
> This monstrous racket,

—who forget, in matters of love, "to be their age." The domestic and economic anxieties of a comfortable bachelor exercise him: shall he give his best wine to casual visitors, or reserve it for Mæcenas' next visit? But though in the shelter of his Sabine farm he lived above the battle, he always remembered it, and many of the Odes which begin in a carefree spirit end on a sterner note.

Brevity is part of the genius of the Latin language in a degree that it can never be of ours, just as our poetry, which has more freedom of movement, and more rhythms at its disposal, cannot rival, or even reproduce, the subtlety of metre obtainable by a Latin poet within the compass of a single line. A second-century critic coined the phrase "*Horatii curiosa felicitas*" to describe the style of the most consummate artist among Latin poets. The tersest literal translation of "*exegi monumentum ære perennius*" needs nine words—Shakespeare's paraphrase took many more—and the weight and gravity of the line cannot be recaptured in English. Sir Edward Marsh's renderings, however, with their refreshing variety of rhythm and attack, their familiarity with the social and political context of the Odes and profound understanding of the poet's mind, read not only like poetry, but like poetry in which the traditions of two literatures have mingled with the happiest effect.

A Russian Family in Exile. "The Family" is the story of an expatriated White Russian family who "kept a boarding-house in the least fashionable and, therefore, the cheapest corner of the British Concession" at Tientsin, in China. The Russian Revolution had thinned their ranks. A large clan once, they now numbered only five. "In plain words, they were a granny, a mother, a daughter and two nephews—the boys being orphans of the two deceased brothers." When the story opens they had a cosmopolitan *clientèle* composed of five Japanese, a Chinaman, and a Bessarabian fortune-teller; later, they take in others, all of them afflicted in mind, body or estate, but all entertaining. In fact, the shifting company at No. 11, Victoria Road displayed such various and representative qualities—with the significant omissions of dullness and avarice—that it almost constitutes a microcosm.

One of the most interesting is Mrs. Parrish, an Englishwoman with a weakness for the bottle. The author does not try to disguise the fact that Mrs. Parrish's continual tippling was squalid, but

The art of military "make-up," or camouflage, is thoroughly understood by these soldiers, who are spraying the clothes of a comrade-in-arms in such a way that he will be invisible in front of a background of bombed buildings. They are men of the ARMY CAMOUFLAGE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING CENTRE *at work.*

The "invisible man"—an observer in a SPECIAL CAMOUFLAGE SUIT *stands by a soldier in ordinary service dress. His markings blend him into the countryside.*

we forget about that, so unostentatious, imaginative and resourceful is the first-aid administered by the grandmother. The family's sympathetic and uncensorious attitude of mind humanises everyone and everything it touches. Further on in the book Mrs. Parrish drops her deplorable habits, but with them her *joie-de-vivre*, her *bon enfant* quality; and though she is obviously going to be a more useful member of society, and proves her gratitude by taking the youngest member of the family back with her to England, her newly-won respectability makes her less attractive. Perhaps it simply is that we cease to be so fond of people when we can

A soldier with rifle in a SPECIAL CAMOUFLAGE SUIT FOR WOODED COUNTRY *has melted into the landscape. From a hundred yards or so away he would be invisible. The art of camouflage has been greatly developed since the last war, when its rôle was to circumvent the camera in addition to deceiving for long periods the eyes of observers armed with powerful glasses, and for the first time in history a military unit was organised for the definite purpose of practising scientific deception. This was first initiated by French artists serving in a French battery with their "Section de Camouflage" in 1915, and in 1916 the British camouflage service was created as a unit of the R.E.*

no longer pity them. . . . Though an idealist, Mme. Fedorova, like most Russian writers, does not idealise human nature; some of its faults are dearer to her than some of its virtues, and she gets her refreshing sense of our common solidarity by looking our weaknesses resolutely in the eye.

The Doctor's Dilemma.

At one time or another most of the characters in the story may be thought to voice her views, though the five Japanese gentlemen who content themselves with bowing and hissing, and Miss Pink, the moral sleuth-hound dedicated to a singularly unpleasant conception of good works, are outside the pale of her sympathy. Miss Pink is a caricature as, in a sense, all Mme. Fedorova's creations are—unless they are just ordinary people on whom Fate has played extraordinary tricks. But one and all, they are markedly articulate; even Amah, the Chinese girl who hopes to become a nun and win a martyr's crown, puts the little English she knows to copious and electrifying use. (The author's own English, always vigorous and fresh, has one or two unaccountable lapses.) The most articulate of all is undoubtedly Professor Chernov. Mme. Fedorova shows her impartiality by portraying him as slightly unhinged at the start and almost raving mad towards the end; but she puts in his mouth the ideas which she finds, I think, most valuable—the ideas of brotherhood which animate the story. Taunted by that mean-spirited snob, Mme. Klimova, with insanity, the Professor vehemently defends himself:

"How could I seem mad to that woman? What *is* strange in me? My love for humanity? My pity for those who suffer? The fact that every injustice makes me willing to fight for them—is *this* madness? Or is it the fact that I left my career as a man of science and devoted my life to the immediate cause of serving mankind in an active way? That I write books against superstitions? Or that I write letters to those in whose power it lies to alleviate the misery of mankind? Is that strange? Or is it strange that human sufferings became my chief concern and I cannot step aside and wash my hands of the responsibility? That I cannot look at human pain, be moved, and then dismiss it, as if it were a scene at the cinema? That I failed to develop a protective shell for my soul and hide within it when the sight of misery is too poignant? Or is it insane that, in order to understand human misery better, I have doomed myself to live in the midst of it? . . . Tell me, Doctor!"

"A sane human being has a certain moderation in everything," said the doctor calmly.

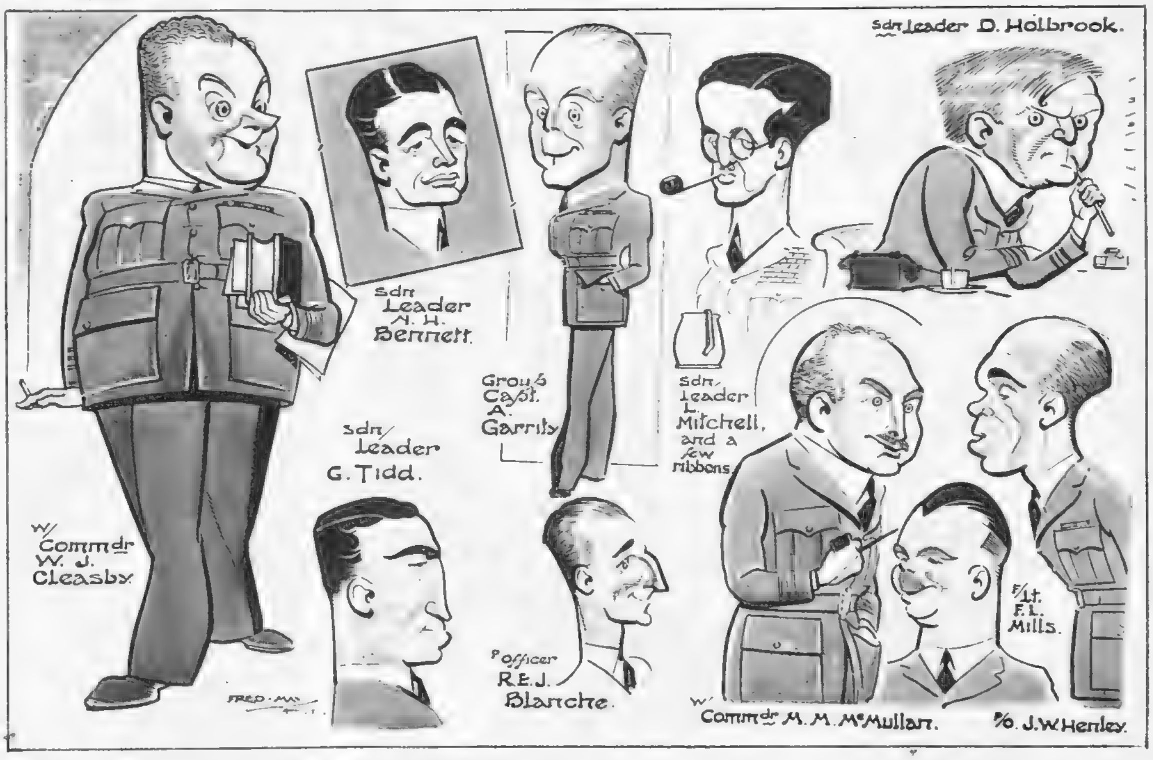
A less honest writer than Mme. Fedorova would have left the doctor nonplussed by the Professor's eloquent tirade; his sensible if chilling answer is a measure of the fairmindedness she brings alike to the smaller and greater problems of her story. In a sense, the doctor's reply is a criticism of the book itself; in certain directions it is certainly lacking in moderation. Lady Dorothea, for instance, and her years'-old quest for the Russian lieutenant who had been the love of her youth: no, one cannot quite believe in them. Infinitely charitable herself, the author (as Dostoievski did on a grander scale) tries to make out of human imperfections a brew so heady with sympathetic understanding as momentarily to intoxicate the reader's judgment and give him a glimpse of the Absolute. The vision fades from his cooling imagination and doubt creeps in, but a gleam remains, a hope for the future which was not there before.

A Hollywood Heroine.

"Hocus Pocus" is a farce inspired by life at Hollywood. The heroine tells her story in a style that sometimes recalls "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," sometimes the romances of Mr. Peter Cheyney; but it is much more highly coloured, in every sense of the phrase. The many improprieties are much easier to understand than the language in which they are clothed, or unclothed; at times verbal obscurity reaches such a pitch that when the author writes "swinging censors," one hardly knows whether it is a misprint or not; and the fun is so furious, as well as so fast, that it is by no means easy to follow. Described by herself as so attractive that "those D.A.R.s from the Middle West 'd kill a policeman to get the laundry tag off my girdle," the heroine keeps two good men dangling, while she holds her own with the film producers, etc., on whom her success depends. She is often forgiven, and sometimes forgiving, but both in the language of supreme insult. Far from damp, Mr. Noel Langley's little squib suffers slightly from monotony of scintillation.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

The Odes of Horace. Translated into English Verse. By Edward Marsh. (*Macmillan; 6s.*)
The Family. By Nina Fedorova. (*Collins; 8s. 6d.*)
Hocus Pocus. By Noel Langley. (*Methuen; 7s. 6d.*)



The EQUIPMENT BRANCH OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE *is a very important part of its personnel. Here is Group Captain Arthur Garrity surrounded by some of his able officers.* (DRAWN BY FRED MAY.)

The tenth of our NEW SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR BY DAVID WRIGHT is published in this issue of "THE SKETCH."

HIGHLIGHTS OF GEORGE BLACK'S 3RD INTIMATE RAG, "BLACK VANITIES."

ZOË GAIL *and the* GEORGE BLACK LOVELIES *in "Midsummer Music," with Miss Gail as the Cherry Picker.*

Left: ZOË GAIL *and the* GEORGE BLACK LOVELIES *singing "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries."*

The Private (BUD FLANAGAN) *challenges the Girl* (EILEEN MOORE) *to a duel in "Do Your Duty."*

"Drop Me a Line": One of Zoë Gail's numbers with the George Black Lovelies, each armed with a fishing-rod.

"Darktown Strutters' Ball" in Mississippi Minstrels, with FRANCES DAY*—in a black wig—with* FLANAGAN *and* ALLEN.

FRANCES DAY *disguised as a darkie beauty in the "Minstrel Wedding" finale of Mississippi Minstrels.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROYE.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROYE.

"BLACK VANITIES" DAY-TIME.

FRANCES DAY *is in splendid form in her numbers in* " **BLACK VANITIES,**" *George Black's third intimate rag, which was due to come to the Victoria Palace last week. Here you see cuts from a film of her singing* " *Much More Lovely,*" " *Do I Love You, Do I?* ", *and* " *The Stutterer,*" *in a lovely full-skirted evening frock designed for her by Cecil Beaton.*

CITY NOTES.

FINANCE IN A FIRST-CLASS CARRIAGE.

"BEFORE we come to the next big war," said The Jobber, "I hope someone will have invented a plan for growing vegetables without having to stoop to conquer them." He straightened his back with the deliberation of the lumbago martyr.

"Jump to it, lad: jump to it!" The City Editor exhorted. "Think of the scarlet runners and the artichokes: they don't wilt."

"Wilt thou!" was the indignant retort. "I'll wager you weren't digging for victory before breakfast this morning."

"I finished my digging on Easter Monday. My wife and I had lunch in the West End, and we were going to see a picture, but the queues were miles long. There were crowds at every bus stop. That should have been a bull point for London Passenger Transport stocks."

"The Board's fixed-interest stocks aren't affected by traffic returns, and the 'C' stock receives a settled proportion out of the revenues of all the lines. So it makes no difference whether the buses are full or not."

"All the same, Transport 'C' should be a cheap lock-up at 30. Pays you ten per cent. on the money."

"Several of the other Home Railway stocks look cheaper. That's what cramps Transport 'C.' Berwick Seconds yield over 16 per cent."

"I've told you before," said The Broker, "that clients don't care for Home Railway stocks. There's a kind of prejudice against them."

"If the public don't like a market they keep out of it," The City Editor declared. "Mind you, I think people are rather missing to-day's chance for getting hold of cheap stock."

"Would you buy Home Railway stocks for yourself?" asked The Engineer.

The City Editor hesitated. "I'm not too sure," he said, "whether I'd put money into Home Rails or not. They ought to be worth buying, on the returns they give. But in the case of Home Railway stocks—you don't mean the prior-charge ones, I suppose?"

"They're safe enough. You can leave them out of account. How about the more speculative stocks? They're the things that give you the big percentage on your money."

"There's always the risk of labour trouble. And there's a chance of nationalisation after the war."

"Nationalisation might prove to be a good thing for Home Railway proprietors."

"So it might. You can see that I am in two minds what to say. Not that my opinion goes for very much, anyway."

"In short," The Broker summed up, "you wouldn't buy Home Railway stocks, although you think they're cheap."

"If I had a lot of money," The City Editor conceded, "I would invest part of it in Home Rails."

"Too ambiguous," The Broker criticised. "Still, I think we know what you mean. And your attitude is very similar to that of the public as a whole."

"Aren't the public usually wrong?"

"Not a bit of it," The Broker replied. "If you want an illustration, look at the way that people have hung on to their War Loan and Consols and other gilt-edged stocks. They have turned out to be absolutely right."

"O.K. by you," The City Editor agreed. "You won't mind admitting, though, that people are apt to lose their heads in, say, a boom."

"We all lose our heads, and our money, in a boom——"

"What is a boom?" The Jobber enquired innocently. "I seem to remember having heard the word, in some dim and distant past."

"I remember a Rubber boom in the last war," remarked The Merchant. "And I made a little money out of it. There doesn't seem much hope of another rubber boom this time."

"Rubber is completely out of favour. The public won't look at the shares, or put a penny into that market."

"Perhaps they haven't got the necessary penny."

"The munition-makers have. They're the people who are getting the big money to-day."

"And thundering hard they work for it," The Engineer defended them. "I must say, from what little I've seen, they earn their pay, and they are liable for Income Tax, of course."

"There are at least three big markets in the Stock Exchange," said The Broker, "where you can get ten per cent. on your money. Home Railway stocks, rubber shares, and iron and steel."

"And none of them are besieged by a crowd of people anxious to get hold of the goods."

"You see in a few hours more people round a sausage-shop, or any fruiterer's that happens to have a few apples, than you do during a whole week in the rubber market," The Jobber had noticed. "It wasn't like that in the last war."

The Engineer recollected having then stood in a queue for "offal," and The Merchant said he once wasted nearly an hour for half a pound of soda. "I remember paying seven-and-six for a dozen eggs; and five shillings for a pound of apples. Things got pretty grim at times, although the Income Tax never went over six shillings in the pound."

"We are a good deal better off in many ways now," The City Editor considered. "There is the ten per cent. yield you can get on the shares Brokie has mentioned. There's the certainty of a huge trade boom after the war——"

"There's the Dominion relief on the Income Tax from a good many mining companies' dividends."

"Don't forget the ten-bob Income Tax."

"You're jolly lucky to have any income at all, to pay tax on. I am willing to bet you we're a darned sight better off than the Germans are."

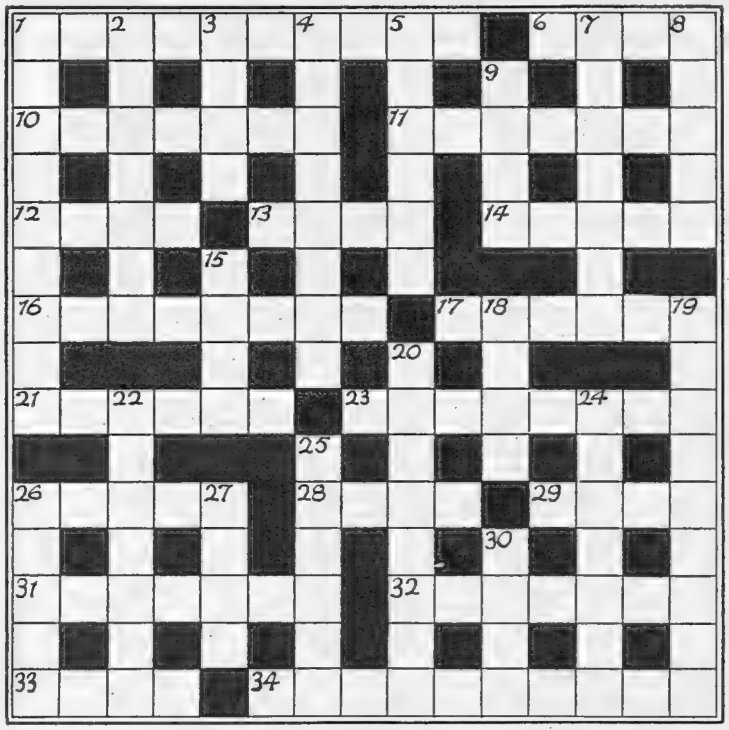
"Safe bet, dearie, seeing that nobody can say for certain, one way or the other. Tell me this, though. Why don't people snap up these ten-per-cent. yields you've been chatting about?"

"Why don't they? Too easy, my dear Watson. The Government want the money: that's where the cash is going. And if we don't play the game in putting it up at $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 per cent., how long do you suppose you will get ten per cent? Or twenty?"

"Make it fifty per cent.," The Jobber suggested, "and we can call the answer a lemon!"

Friday, April 25, 1941.

"THE SKETCH" CROSS-WORD PUZZLE.



ACROSS.

1. This is at the post office, not in the Latin alphabet (4 hyphen 6).
6. It may be Irish (4).
10. Lucky fellow who has an entrance in the shelter (7).
11. Sick recess in church (7).
12. One tree, though there's ten on a French island (4).
13. An imitator in speech or writing (4).
14. I am in the middle of the billow (5).
16. Why the personages cannot do their logarithms? (8).
17. Wrath is responsible for most of such peril (6).
21. This ruffles my robe (6).
23. Signifies secondarily (8).
26. He had a hundred eyes (5).
28. To bring to naught (4).
29. A wine that would be quicker inside her (4).
31. Villainous (7).
32. Illuminating vessel showing a girl behind a cushion (7).
33. Does it help to keep the east coast clean? (4).
34. Snake-like feature of Hyde Park (10).

DOWN.

1. Shakespeare referred to its primrose path (9).
2. How to make the tame gnu grow larger! (7).
3. Large quantities (4).
4. A wooden plate for the digger of ditches (8).
5. He rode back around it (6).
7. Excellent—but not at golf (7).
8. We simply set about her (5).
9. Iser's was dark as winter (4).
15. This seems to appeal to the Turkish governor to do as he is told (4).
18. Girl's name current in India (4).
19. To live in the country may suggest that Catherine has got tarnished (9).
20. What the dishonest dog-dealer did? (three words; 4, 1, 3).
22. Mendicants (7).
24. Let soil produce a well-known composer (7).
25. American card game (6).
26. Awry like part of London (5).
27. Quarter pack (4).
30. Foreign Office garden (4).

BETTE DAVIS has scored big hits in such contrasted rôles as Queen Elizabeth, the name-part of "The Old Maid," and the heroine in "All This and Heaven Too." "THE BRIDE CAME C.O.D." lets her show what she can do in broad comedy. Here JAMES CAGNEY is picking cactus prickles out of her!

This is how BETTE DAVIS *met the prickles! She leapt from a 'plane in Death Valley and found the cactus.*

And here BETTE, *as Joan, in company with* JAMES CAGNEY, *as Steve, meets a strange fellow-guest in a somewhat deserted bar.*

BETTE DAVIS'S LATEST—"THE BRIDE CAME C.O.D."

PASSENGER ON THE ELEVEN-TEN.*

By A. M. BURRAGE.

I CAN see him quite well in my mind's eye, but I am baffled now that I want to describe him. How does one describe a fellow-creature, entirely commonplace as regards externals, in such a manner as to make others see him with one's own eyes ?

Let me do my best—but you will not see him just as I saw him. I guessed him to be past thirty years of age : he was darkish and sallow, and the lack of geniality in his looks did not belie a taciturnity which I was soon to discover for myself. He was respectably dressed in dark clothes almost entirely concealed by an overcoat which was neither new nor yet shabby. His bowler-hat was rather old and the shape struck me as being an antique—but then, I am never sure about bowler-hats.

We were alone together in a third-class compartment. The train was scheduled not to stop between Paddington and Reading. After Reading it stopped everywhere, which, I suppose, made it a convenient train for half-day excursionists—for this was a Wednesday.

I am not a particularly curious person, but I find that my waking mind needs some point of focus. I had carelessly dropped my evening paper and my eye was attracted by a pleasant picture of a pretty Devon cove displayed in the advertisement panel of the carriage.

Thus my gaze passed on to my travelling companion. It was not the first time that I had been so placed, and previously I had beguiled such journeys by trying to guess something about my fellow-passengers—their callings, their views on current subjects and suchlike things—and then beginning a conversation, with the object of discovering how far my surmises had been right. So I began covertly to take stock of the man opposite me and to try to deduce as much as possible about him, after the fashion of all the detectives of fiction.

Not a farmer—no. Few farmers in real life have the look of the traditional John Bull, but they have the open-air look about them. A commercial traveller ? Again no. Clothes too old-fashioned—and besides, would hardly be travelling at that hour. Scarcely well enough dressed to be a village schoolmaster. They 're quite smart nowadays, and besides, they have time to travel only at the week-ends. Certainly not a professional man, such as a doctor or lawyer ; and again, not a man who worked with his hands.

And then I guessed it. The village storekeeper. And he had been up to town partly on business and partly perhaps on pleasure. If so, he seemed to have failed in his pursuit of fun. His waxen face was as dismal as a wet Sunday. Perhaps business was bad with him, or he had private troubles. Oh, but village shopkeeper he certainly was !

We had almost reached Slough when that conclusion came to me, and it remained to prove it and afterwards, perhaps, to beguile the journey with general talk. I began the game, moving my king's pawn up a couple of squares ; or, in other words, I asked him for a match.

He did not answer. Indeed, he gave no sign that he had heard me. And I was about to repeat my application, when something stopped me.

I suddenly discovered that I did not like him.

It is really very hard to define what I mean by that. I am not a prejudiced person by any habit of mind. Nor did I feel that he was a wicked man or one likely to spring a surprise attack on me. In common and simple words, I just did not like being in his company—in the same way, I suppose, that some men cannot bear being in the same room as a cat.

This discovery of my mental attitude towards him gave my mind something else to play with. We were two fellow-creatures who had never seen each other before and would probably never see each other again. Why this revulsion on my part as if he were some sort of reptile—a reptile safe in a cage and unable to spring and strike ? I began to wonder if this feeling were reciprocated, and if this was the reason why he had failed to hear my request for a match.

The trouble was that I wanted to smoke, and hardly liked to produce my own matches after having asked for one of his and seemingly met with a tacit refusal. I considered, summoned a little hardihood, shook my coat, and matches in a half-empty box made audible answer.

" Oh, I 've got some, after all," I muttered, as if I were talking to myself, and took them out.

He gave no sign as I lit a cigarette. He seemed to be looking towards me but not at me. He gave me the impression that if I were not sitting just where I was he would have been looking at the blank wall of the partition behind my head.

" Oh, I don't like you ! " I thought, still shielding the match with my cupped hands. " I don't say you 're a bad lot. You don't look it. But I don't like being here with you. You make me creep. Why do you make me creep—you extremely commonplace and apparently quite respectable person ? "

If only I had had something to read I should have felt more or less at ease. At least I need not have kept looking at him, and my gaze kept on being drawn to that plain, sallow face. It was embarrassing, although he seemed not to notice. I began to wonder if he would suddenly ask me why I was staring at him—and even that truculent gesture would have been a relief.

He sat almost motionless, although I could not say that he did not move at all. He righted himself after the train rocked him. He eased a muscle here and a muscle there of that complicated machinery which will not have us be quite still for very long, even in sleep. But no more than that. Indeed, I think that if he had made the least gesture of a hand I should have been startled into flinching.

So we travelled for nearly an hour until the train began to slacken its speed outside Reading.

I was going on into Wiltshire to stay with friends, and had only half my journey done as regarded time. After Reading the train would stop at nearly every station. And at Reading I had more than half a mind to get out and change my compartment.

That I did not do so I can put down to a variety of reasons, although I did not know the real one, or the one which weighed most with me. Perhaps he would be getting out there, or at the next stop. Perhaps somebody else would give me—well, comfort, for I know of no other word—by getting in. After all, why should I be driven out by a personality which was quite unreasonably distasteful to me ? At the best it would be pandering to a kind of cowardice. And again, if he saw me leave the compartment and enter another he might secretly take offence, and I had no reason for wishing to wound him.

So, still together and alone, we left Reading, and after that I knew there was little chance of anybody else getting in. People get off that train at the country stations, but they rarely get into it.

I am not prepared to say how many stations we had passed since Reading when the thing happened. I am going to give one of the stations a fictitious name and call it Woolbury. As we drew level with the platform my travelling companion began to move. This might have startled me if I had not assured myself that I must see him move sooner or later unless his destination lay beyond mine. The train stopped and he got up, lurched, and went to the door.

I did not for the moment follow him with my eyes, and I do not know whether to regret it or not. I might have had a very disagreeable shock. Looking back, I cannot say if I heard the door open and close. Certainly it was closed when I looked round again, and above the back of his head I saw the station's name in blue upon a dim lamp.

The train halted for a space only of seconds, and it was on the move again before I saw a woman on the platform. I had a fleeting

[Continued on page 160.

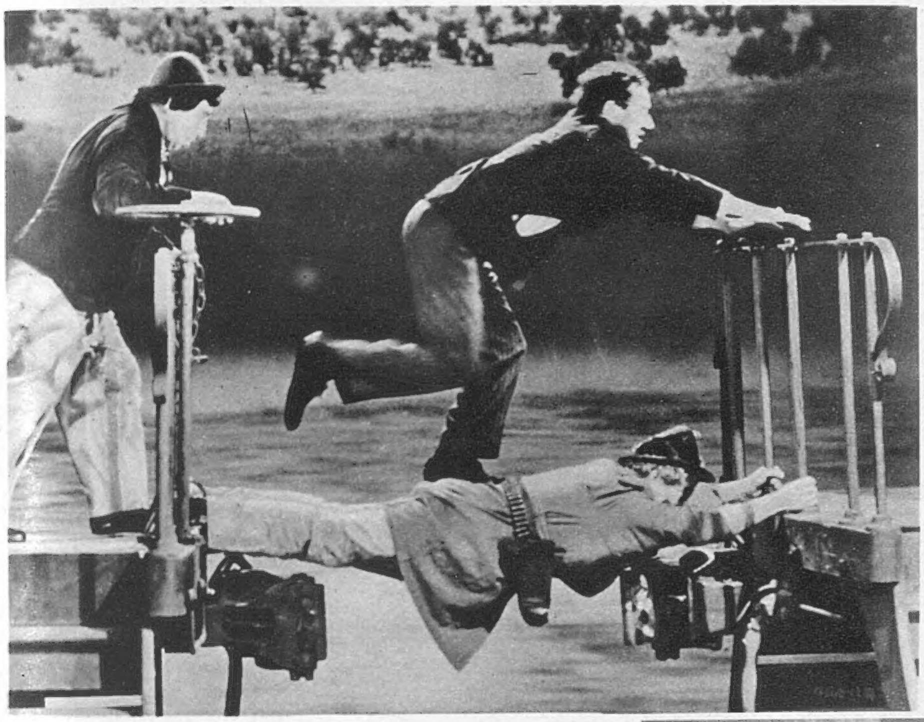
* *All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

KNIGHTS-ERRANT GROUCHO, CHICO AND HARPO!

S. *Quentin Quale* (GROUCHO MARX) *has a flirtatious interlude with Lulubelle* (JUNE MACCLOY).

"THE MARX BROTHERS GO WEST," new M.-G.-M. picture which was due at the Empire on April 25, introduces the well-known trio as 1870 adventurers who go West in search of a fortune. They get hold of the title-deeds to Dead Man's Gulch, but are unaware of the value of the land in connection with the New York and Western Railroad extension, so carelessly write an I.O.U. for beer on the document and leave it in the saloon. When they find that the land is the inheritance of the late owner's "little baby granddaughter," Eve Wilson, they go all Knight Errant and determine to get it for her. This entails a race to Dodgeville against the villains, Beecher and Baxter—and need we add that Groucho, Chico and Harpo get there first?

Eve Wilson (DIANA LEWIS) *meets S. Quentin Quale* (GROUCHO MARX), *Joe Panello* (CHICO MARX), *and "Rusty" Panello* (HARPO MARX).



Quale and the Panellos board the train to Dodgeville: a lively acrobatic sequence by the MARX BROTHERS.

Paleface and Redskin alliance: the MARX BROTHERS *meet the chief in full war-paint.*

Eve Wilson (DIANA LEWIS) *sets out in search of her legacy with the* MARX BROTHERS.

HARPO *joins in a Redskin concert and plays his famous instrument with enormous gusto and élan.*

WOMEN IN WARTIME

IN AND OUT OF TOWN

A WHITE hat can make a dark suit look gaily dressed for wartime weddings or parties on leave. Here is a model for 39s. 6d. from Fenwick, 62, New Bond Street, swathed with veiling and finished with three bows on the crown.

NEW hats can be a real economy, for they bring out surprising possibilities in last year's clothes. Fenwick's have an attractive and unusual collection, including the model above in pale biscuit-coloured straw, tied with veiling and a ribbon bow. This costs 39s. 6d., and can also be made in felt. They have sailor shapes, too, in striped cotton to match their blouses.

CHECKS are everywhere this spring, and dress-and-jacket suits are made in hard-wearing, strictly tailored materials. Harrods, of Knightsbridge, have the outfit on the left in a black and white pattern with a red overcheck. The frock buttons all the way up the front, and its white collar can be worn over the collarless jacket. They have coats and skirts, too, in Glen Urquhart checks of various colours, designed for an active life.

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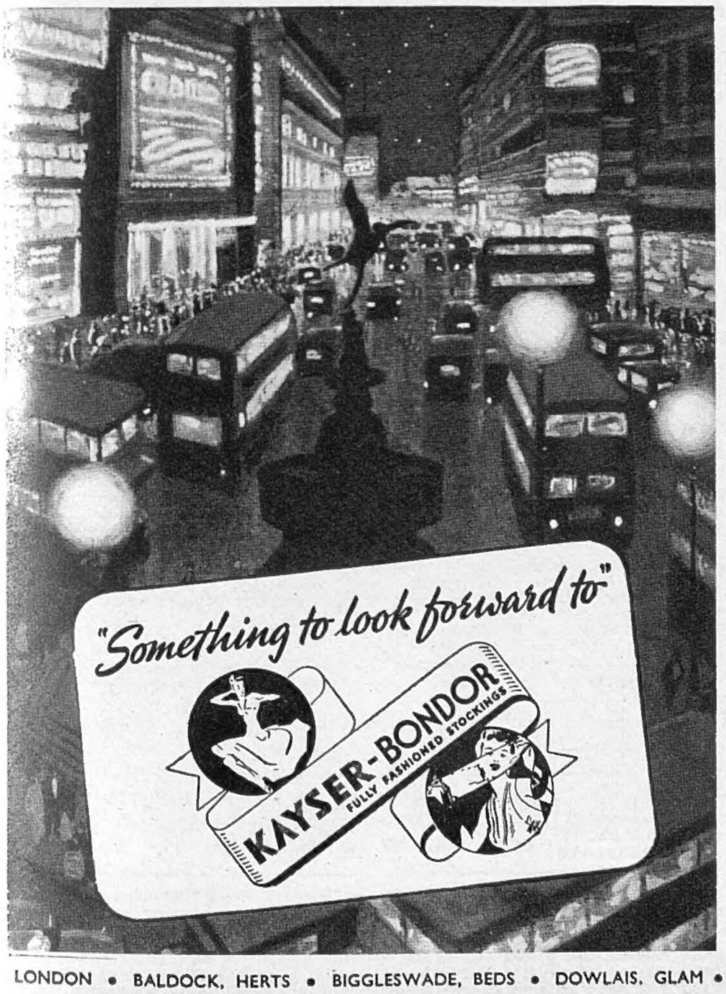

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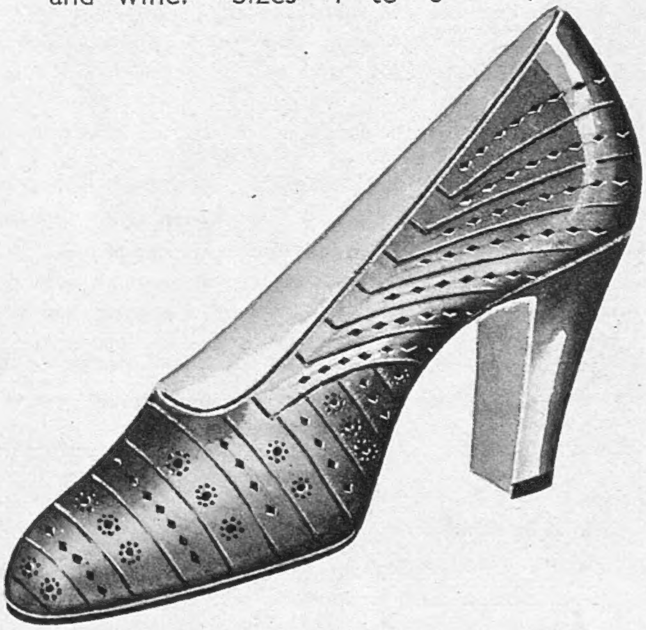

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PASSENGER ON THE ELEVEN-TEN. —(*Continued from page 156.*)

vision of her face, and it had passed before I heard her cry out. I could not guess what emotion dragged that scream from her lips. The window was up, and the wheels just then were gathering momentum. I jumped to the window and wrestled with the strap, but by the time I had the window down and was able to look back there was no more than a receding blur of dull lights behind me.

Well, something had happened on that platform, almost under my gaze; but what? It was food for thought—uncomfortable and possibly unprofitable thought—as the train passed on. I had been strangely impressed by a man who had been my travelling companion for upwards of an hour, and when he had left the train a woman had screamed as if at the sight of him. For all I knew to the contrary I might have been witness to the prelude to a murder.

Time, of course, would satisfy my curiosity as to whether anything very much out of the ordinary had after all occurred. It would be in the newspapers; certainly in the local papers. And having thrown that sop to the questioning child that is in the heart of every man, I reached at last the little station among the downs and heard Templer's voice greet me as I alighted.

I said nothing to him about my journey that night—or, rather, that morning—for I had no intention of keeping him up for more than the duration of one cigarette and one drink. But he saw me looking a little odd and he remarked on it.

"You don't look up to the mark," he said. "Feeling tired?"

"Not awfully," I answered, "but I 've just had rather a queer experience."

He smiled while I told him, and went on smiling after I had finished telling him.

"Queer things, these antipathies," he said. "Dogs get them quite a lot. You 've got a canine complex. Go and get psycho-analysed. If you let it grow on you you 'll start leaving bones on the floor and biting the dustman."

"I hadn't antipathy for the man," I protested. "I didn't hate him. I 'd no reason to. I just wasn't happy in his company."

"Isn't that just the same thing?" he laughed.

"Yes—and no. I can't explain. And, anyhow, what made that woman cry out when he got out of the train?"

"It was probably his wife. Very likely she noticed that he had left his umbrella behind and was beginning to tell him about it. Wives do."

It is rather hard to be laughed at when one is mystified and disturbed, but it is better on those occasions to join in with a smile, however unwillingly. I did my best.

"Anyhow," he said, speaking my own thought, "if anything happened on the platform there it will be in the papers. At least, it will be in our local one if it isn't important enough to be reported in London. It comes out the day after to-morrow, and I 'll keep an eye open. Let 's see—your train was the eleven-ten out of Paddington, wasn't it?"

"That 's right. And Woolbury was the station."

"Right. Well, we 'll see. Wait for the local paper. Of course, there won't be anything in it unless something really serious happened. Even our local paper can't make a story out of a woman letting out a yell on a country platform. Case of murder or serious bodily harm and we shall hear of it to-morrow night—if not sooner, on the wireless."

We left it at that, and I woke on the following morning with the disagreeable impression on my mind almost smoothed out by sleep. In the evening there arrived an early edition of a London paper, but that had nothing to tell me. Clearly no crime had been committed on the platform of Woolbury Station.

But on the following morning Templer, already dressed, came into my room before I was astir, a news-sheet folded behind his back. I knew by the look of him that there was something in it which was pertinent to my experience of two nights since. He saw what was passing through my mind and nodded at me and smiled. It was the queerest smile I had ever seen him wear.

"Something there about Woolbury?" I asked.

"Er—yes," said Templer quietly; and rather in the manner of a doctor he crossed the room and drew up my blind. "It will be a shock to you," he said, turning. "And—well, if you want to know—it 's been one to *me*. I 'll tell you first, I think, and then you can read it for yourself afterwards. It 's only a paragraph or two, and they 're headed 'The Faithful Heart'—after the play.

"It 's about the death of a woman on Woolbury platform just after your train came in. No, don't get scared. It wasn't murder. There 'll be an inquest, of course, but they can only bring in 'Death from Natural Causes'—in this case, heart failure, I suppose.

"It seems that there was an elderly woman named Miss Melliss living at Woolbury, and many years ago she was engaged to the man who kept the little general shop in the village.

"One Wednesday he went up to London to buy the engagement ring, intending to return by the last train. She was at the station to meet him, but he didn't arrive. Next day she heard that he 'd been run over and killed. That 's all years and years ago.

"It seems she took it very much to heart and never married, and of late years her mind had become affected. She 'd got it into her head that one night he 'd be coming home by that last train, and she was always there to meet him.

"The people at the station hadn't the heart to turn her away, and everybody knew her story. It seemed to console her to go and meet that train, and if she were disappointed she never showed it.

"Two nights ago, when the train came in—the train you were on—she was there as usual. And just as the train was leaving the porter on the gate heard her cry out and he ran to find her lying dead on the platform."

He paused and looked at me narrowly, almost nervously.

"Yes," I said, "I heard her cry out. I told you!"

"Well, now, what about the man you travelled down with—the man you didn't feel happy about? Here it is in the last paragraph. 'Albert Smith, the porter on duty, hearing Miss Melliss cry out, immediately ran to her assistance. According to Smith, *no passenger left the train.*'" [THE END.

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